SUBJECTS.

Dewan's reply.—The Member's views will be communicated to the High Court for such action as they may deem necessary.

5. *Revision of the High Court Circular relating to the production of copies of records by parties.*

Mr. M. Kesava Pillai (Member, Neyyattinkara Taluk) said that, under the Circular of the High Court, even copies of the records to be filed by the parties had to be obtained through the Court copyists. The parties therefore had now to entrust their valuable documents to the copyists without even a receipt therefor, and they had to wait for a very long time before copies were obtained from the latter. Prior to the present Circular, the parties were allowed to file their own copies in such cases. As the Circular in question gave room for much delay and hardship to the litigant public, the Member requested that it might be so modified as to restore the old practice.

Dewan's reply.—If the Member will write down in detail all that he has to say and send up the same to Government, it will be forwarded to the High Court for such action as they may deem necessary.

6. *Substitution of a Tamil religious book for the Koran for administering oaths to Mahomedans in Courts.*

Mr. Gulamytheen Pillai of Thiruvithancode (Member, Nominated) said that the Mahomedans considered it highly objectionable that the Koran, which was their religious book, should be handled by non-Mahomedans in administering oaths in courts. According to their religious injunctions, even the Mahomedans could not touch the book when they were in a polluted state. No doubt, the circular orders of the High Court laid down that the Koran should be handled as far as possible only by Mahomedans in administering oaths, but he had painfully to mention that the practice was not in strict conformity with the provisions of the Circular. He had brought up this subject at the second session of the Assembly, but nothing had been done to redress this grievance of the community. He therefore requested that any Tamil book containing religious stories of the Mahomedan faith might be substituted for the Koran.

Dewan's reply. – Government will invite the opinion of the High Court on the suggestion made by the Member and see what could be done.

7. *Separation of the revenue and magisterial functions of Tahsildars.*

Mr. G. Krishna Pillai (Member, Vaikam Taluk) said that, owing to the concentration of multifarious duties in the Tahsildar, his magisterial work suffered at present. He had to attend to the work of revenue collection, dispose of puduval, transfer of registry and other revenue cases, and supervise the conduct of the religious and chari-

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

SUBJECTS.

table institutions within his jurisdiction. Under the orders of Government, he was also bound to be on tour for 40 days in every quarter. Owing to the urgent nature of the revenue work and the strict check that was being exercised over that branch of his work, the result generally was that the magisterial cases were adjourned from time to time or posted for hearing in the circuit camp of the Tahsildar. That necessarily caused a good deal of avoidable loss and trouble to the parties by their having to take their vakils and witnesses to the Tahsildar's shifting camps. Cases were also not rare when the Tahsildar had to be drawn away by some urgent revenue or devaswom work in the midst of the hearing of a magisterial case. In view of the above difficulties, he requested that the magisterial work of the Tahsildar might be separated from his revenue and other duties by the appointment of Stationary Magistrates for the purpose. He was glad that Government were already following the policy and his prayer was that it might be extended to the remaining taluks of the State. Under the change, he added, it would be possible to enhance the territorial jurisdiction of Magistrates and also to reduce the number of taluks.

Mr. K. N. Parameswaran Pillai (Member, Chirayinkil Taluk) said that the separation of the revenue and magisterial duties advocated by him was with special reference to the Chirayinkil taluk. Unlike the other Tahsildars, the Tahsildar of Chirayinkil was labouring under certain special disadvantages. He had to make arrangements at Warkalay in connection with the frequent trips of various Government officers and distinguished men. For a few months of the year, he had to be busy making arrangements in connection with the Royal tours to Attungal. He had also to come to Trivandrum in connection with the Bhadradeepam ceremonies. On all these occasions, the Tahsildar, for no fault of his, could ill-afford to devote as much time to his magisterial work as he might wish. The Member said that it was not necessary to describe the difficulties and loss which the people of the taluk would be put to under such a state of affairs. He therefore requested that the case of Chirayinkil might be specially considered by Government and a separate Magistrate appointed at Attungal as early as possible.

Dewan's reply.—There are not very many Tahsildars whose work can, in my opinion, be considered excessive. In the case of those whose work *is* excessive, steps have been already taken and will be taken, either to relieve them wholly of their magisterial duties, or to reduce the volume

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

SUBJECTS.

of their magisterial work. The Quilon Tahsildar has been relieved wholly of his magisterial work by the appointment of a Stationary First Class Magistrate at Quilon. The Neyyattinkara Tahsildar has also been similarly relieved, by shifting the Parassala Magistrate's Court to Neyyattinkara and giving it jurisdiction over the whole taluk. Similarly, the Agastiswaram Tahsildar is being relieved of his magisterial work by the Kottar Magistrate being given jurisdiction over the whole taluk. The jurisdiction of the Kayankulam Sub-Magistrate has been enlarged, some relief being given thereby to the Tahsildars of Kartigapally and Karunagapally. Action is also being taken to enlarge the jurisdiction of the Tiruvattar and Colachel Magistrates, so as to give some relief to the Tahsildars of Vilavancode, Kalkulam and Eraniel. Government *are* pursuing the policy of giving relief—in the magisterial branch—to such of the Tahsildars as are considered to require such relief, and all this is being done with as little of extra expenditure as possible to the State. The proposal of Mr. Parameswaran Pillai to provide a Stationary Magistrate's Court at Attungal will be enquired into.

Appointment of Honorary Magistrates in towns.

Mr. H. Mahadeva Iyer (Member, Town Improvement Committee, Trivandrum) suggested the desirability of appointing Honorary Magistrates in all the towns. He said that the subject had been brought forward at the third session of the Assembly and that a favourable reply was then given. But no further steps had since been taken in that direction. With the passing of the new Bill for amending the Towns Conservancy and Improvement Regulation, the subordinates of the Sanitary department would be invested with the powers of Police officers for taking cognisance of offences under the Regulation. As the efficient administration of the law depended on the prompt disposal of cases, and as the resort to the existing Magistracy with their regular work would be tardy, the creation of Honorary Magistrates in different parts of the town with summary powers to dispose of petty offences under special and local laws would be of great advantage. It would then be possible for the regular Magistracy to devote their exclusive attention towards the consideration of the graver offences. Should it be considered that in any places the present Magistrates had not enough work to do, their territorial jurisdiction might be increased wherever necessary and the number of the paid Magistracy reduced, so as to leave a saving to Government. Much of the success of the measure no doubt depended on the competency of the men to be selected as Honorary Magistrates. The persons most eligible for such appointments would be

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